

How Fraud Impacts Idahoans
Scholarship Contest Third Place Winner
Connie Shipley
Aberdeen, Idaho

Connie Shipley

13 April 2010

How Fraud Impacts Idahoans

There are many different kinds of fraud in the state of Idaho. Insurance fraud, identity theft, employee theft, and medical fraud all affect the strength of our companies and the insurance industry. The cost of fraud affects everyone not just a few people. There are ways to recognize and prevent fraud from happening. Reporting fraud to authorities is also important.

Insurance fraud has the highest impact on society. Insurance fraud is accepting money from your insurance company for claims that aren't legitimate. One example of that would be medical charges. One way to prevent this fraud would be to check the bill from your doctor every time to make sure it is correct. If everybody did this, the money the insurance company put out would be an honest amount and there wouldn't be fraud.

Another kind of fraud to be aware of is identity theft. This is where a person is claiming to be you and using your money for goods and services. A good way to prevent identity theft is to safeguard your credit cards and debit cards. Don't let your cards out of your sight, like at hotels and restaurants. I lost my wallet last year and it contained my debit card. I called my bank and they gladly canceled that card and got me a new one. This was a good way to protect my identity. It is a good idea to check your credit report every six months to see if there is anything unusual. This can be checked for free. If there are any problems it can be solved in a timely manner before things get out of hand. Idaho is a better place when individuals in Idaho take steps to protect their identity. Less fraud equals a financially stronger Idaho.

Employee theft is a kind of fraud everyone is faced with. Employees taking things home that they shouldn't is wrong. It affects the strength of the company they work for. Employees have access to information about clients. It is critical to maintain confidentiality. For example I worked in a nursing home this past summer. I had access to personal belongings, records, and information. In order to protect their financial, medical, and personal well being, I didn't interfere with their things. We all want to feel safe in Idaho, and it starts with one person at a time doing what is right.

Every individual who pays for insurance to meet their personal needs is also paying for fraudulent charges. Idaho consumers pay an estimate of 153 million dollars in accident and health claims that are fraudulent. These charges naturally pass on to the people who buy insurance by paying increased premiums.

In addition to protecting yourself as an individual, reporting fraud is of benefit to the whole society. This can be done by contacting the Better Business Bureau, Attorney General, or local authorities.

Idaho is a wonderful place to live. A great way to keep it this way is to be aware of fraud and take steps to protect yourself and your neighbor.

Bibliography

<https://www.annualcreditreport.com/cra/index.jsp>

<http://fraudguides.com/>

<http://www.bcbs.com/blueresources/anti-fraud/what-you-can-do.html>

<http://www.allbusiness.com/human-resources/workplace-health-safety-security/3935-1.html>

<http://fightfraud.idaho.gov/>